

WINE EVALUATION AND TRIVIA BOARD GAME

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FIELD OF THE INVENTION

- [02] The present invention relates to a board game, more particularly to a board game that incorporates elements of wine evaluation, wine appreciation, and wine trivia.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

- [03] The board game of the present invention introduces a player to the basic elements of wine evaluation, appreciation and trivia, including those elements relating to wine drinking, winemaking, and wine history.
- [04] Known board games directed toward wine appreciation include those intended to educate players on the various wine regions of the world, as disclosed in U.S. Patent No. 6,247,698 to Twombly. The Twombly patent discloses a board game utilizing a map of various wine regions of the world and playing cards that correspond to the wine regions on that map. The playing cards facilitate strategic play and contain trivia pertaining to the various wine regions and to the wine industry. The Twombly patent, however, does not incorporate wine tasting and evaluation into the play of the board game. In addition, the Twombly patent does not disclose the use of trivia cards that contain answers to trivia question in addition to explanatory information concerning the correct answer to the trivia questions or the reasons why the other answers were incorrect. In this regard, the Twombly patent does not provide players additional educational information regarding aspects of wine making, wine evaluation, and wine history.
- [05] Accordingly, there exists a genuine need for a board game that overcomes the disadvantages of the prior art board games. The present invention solves the aforementioned problems of the prior art.

BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

- [06] In one example, a method of playing a board game is provided. In the method, a game piece is advanced to a game space. An unidentified beverage is tasted in response to the game piece landing on the game space. At least one question is answered about the unidentified beverage. In another example, a game board is provided. The game board includes a plurality of trivia game spaces and at least one blind taste test game space. In still another example, a kit is provided. The kit includes a game board including a plurality of trivia game spaces and at least one blind taste test game space.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWING

- [07] The foregoing aspects and many of the advantages of the present invention will become readily appreciated by reference to the following detailed description of the preferred embodiment, when taken in conjunction with the accompanying drawings, wherein:
- [08] Figure 1 depicts an exemplary embodiment of the game board used in the present invention;
- [09] Figure 2 depicts an exemplary embodiment of a wine label space located on the game board;
- [10] Figure 3A is an exemplary front view of a Question and Answer card used in the present invention;
- [11] Figure 3B is an exemplary back view of a Question and Answer card used in the present invention;
- [12] Figure 4A is an exemplary embodiment of a blind taste test space on the game board;
- [13] Figure 4B is another exemplary embodiment of a blind taste test space on the game board;
- [14] Figure 5 is an exemplary embodiment of the final space on the game board;
- [15] Figure 6 is an exemplary embodiment of an indicator or marker on the game board;

- [16] Figure 7 is another exemplary embodiment of an indicator or marker on the game board;
- [17] Figure 8 is an exemplary embodiment of a Bonus/Challenge card marker on the game board;
- [18] Figure 9 depicts an exemplary embodiment of the note sheet used in the present invention
- [19] Figure 10A is an exemplary front view of a Bonus/Challenge card used in the present invention; and
- [20] Figure 10B is an exemplary back view of a Bonus/Challenge card used in the present invention.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

- [21] For a better understanding of the present invention, reference may be had to the following detailed description taken in conjunction with the accompanying drawings. Figure 1 depicts the board 2 of the present invention. The board 2 contains a plurality of game spaces 4. In an exemplary embodiment, the game spaces 4 are located on the perimeter of the board 2. However, one of ordinary skill in the art will recognize that the game spaces 4 can be arranged in other configurations and locations on the board 2 without departing from the spirit of the invention. In an exemplary embodiment, some of the game spaces 4 may be wine label spaces 6, which correspond to exemplary wine labels containing information pertaining to a particular type of wine. For example, a wine label space 6, which is shown in Figure 2, may contain information pertaining to alcohol content, grape variety name, region, winemaker and/or vintage year. The wine label spaces 6 may correspond to actual wine labels used in the wine industry or may be imitation wine labels that merely exemplify the design and/or type of information contained on a typical wine label. It should be noted that board 2 is not limited to an association with wine. The principles of the game described herein could also be applied to beer or spirits. In such an embodiment, wine label spaces 6 could be replaced by beer labels or scotch labels. During play, wine label spaces 6 act as trivia spaces; players advance over the wine label spaces 6 by answering wine trivia questions contained on Question and Answer cards. The

questions may be in different formats, for example, multiple choice, true and false, fill in the blank, etc. An exemplary embodiment of one such Question and Answer card is shown in Figures 3A and 3B. In the preferred embodiment, the trivia question is in the form of a multiple choice question. The front of a Question and Answer card contains the question and multiple choice answers, if appropriate, and the back of the card contains the correct answer. Underneath the correct answer, the card contains additional explanatory information concerning either the correct answer or the reasons why the other answers were incorrect. In this regard, the present invention provides the players additional educational information regarding aspects of wine making, wine evaluation, and wine history

- [22] In addition, some of the game spaces 4 may be blind taste test spaces 8. When a player lands on a blind taste test space 8, the player is required to taste or sample an unidentified wine (as described below, at the beginning of the game, the players taste test a plurality of wines and record their impressions on those wines along with other vital information on a blind taste test note sheet). The blind taste test spaces 8 may contain at least one question concerning that wine, such as questions regarding the name of the wine, the year and/or the region, or the like. When the player answers the question or the series of questions correctly, the player may advance. Figures 4A and 4B depict exemplary embodiments of the blind taste test spaces 8. In addition, one of the game spaces 4 may be a start space 9 and one of the game spaces 4 may be a final space or winning space 10. During play, the player starts at the start space 9 and ends at the final space 10. When the player reaches the final space 10, that player wins the game. An exemplary embodiment of the final space 10 is shown in Figure 5.
- [23] Further, the board 2 may have indicators or markers 12 that assist the players during play of the game. For example, as shown in Figure 6, the board 2 may have indicators or markers 12 that correspond to the three steps on evaluating wines, which are viewing the color of the wine, smelling the wine, and tasting the wine. Further, as shown in Figure 7, the board 2 may have indicators or markers 12 that correspond to common wine vocabulary pertaining to a wine's color, aroma, and/or flavor, etc. To further assist the players, the text of common red wine vocabulary may be printed on the board 2 in a color different from the text of the common white wine vocabulary.

By way of example, the text of the red wine vocabulary may be printed in red, while the text of the white wine vocabulary may be printed in light green.

- [24] In addition, the board 2 may also have directive card markers 14 where the players may place directive cards, such as Bonus/Challenge cards (the function of the directive cards is explained in detail below) while playing the game. As shown, in Figure 1, the directive card markers 14 may be located on the interior of the board 2. Figure 8 depicts an exemplary embodiment of a Bonus/Challenge card marker 14. During play, a player may play a directive card, as shown in Figures 10A and 10B, by placing the card on the directive card marker 14.
- [25] At the beginning of the game, the players taste and evaluate a plurality of wine samples. Preferably, the players taste and evaluate at least two different wines to sample. However, any number of samples can be used to play the game without departing from the spirit and scope of the invention. Each player tastes the different wine samples and records information about each sample on a taste test note sheet 16. The recorded information about each sample is used later when a player lands on a blind taste test space 8. The note sheet 16 may provide space for the players to record certain vital information for each of the different wines. Such information may include the name of the wine, the year on the bottle, the region and/or country from which the wine comes, or the like. In addition, the note sheet 16 may provide space for the players to record their sensory impressions of each of the wines tasted. Further, the sheet may describe and explain the three steps to wine tasting and evaluation (which are evaluating the color of the wine, evaluating the smell of the wine and evaluating the taste of the wine). Figure 9 depicts an exemplary embodiment of the note sheet 16. Players are allowed to consult the notes they made at the start of the game pertaining to the different wines before performing each of their blind taste tests. A player's review of his or her notes may help the player remember the color, smell, and taste of each of the wines, which may, and accordingly, may assist the player in successfully identifying the wine that the player is blind tasting. In addition, the note sheet 16 may contain directions that instruct the player to consult the inner border of the board 2 for common wine vocabulary to help them identify the colors, scents and tastes that the player is noticing in each of the

wines sampled. Once the players taste test all of the wine samples, the wines are to be placed out of sight, ideally in another room.

- [26] To play the game, each player is provided a playing piece along with three directive cards. In one example, the playing piece could have a wine theme. For example, the playing piece could be a wine cork (either real or synthetic) or be shaped like a wine bottle, etc. Figures 10A and 10B depict exemplary embodiments of the directive cards. The directive cards can be a bonus card, a challenge card, or a combination of both. For the remainder of this disclosure, the directive cards will be referred to as Bonus/Challenge cards. One of ordinary skill in the art will recognize that any number of Bonus/Challenge cards may be used with the present invention without departing from the spirit and scope of the invention. All players place their playing pieces at the start space 9. The players select a starting player and that player is asked a trivia question. With a correct answer, the player moves ahead one space to the first game space 4.
- [27] On that player's next turn, if the player's game piece is on a wine label space 6, that player is asked another trivia question. Again with a correct answer, that player can move to the next game space 4. If that player gets the question wrong, however, that player must remain in that space until that player correctly answers a trivia question on subsequent turns. In the preferred embodiment, each player gets only one trivia question per turn. Of course, it is within the scope of the invention to play the game such that a player could be given more than one question during each turn. For example, a player's turn would last until that player answered a question incorrectly.
- [28] If the game space 4 that the player lands on is a blind taste test space 8, the player must take or perform a blind taste test on one of the wine samples that the player previously evaluated at the beginning of the game. Of course, it is within the scope and spirit of the invention to play the game such that a player must correctly answer a trivia question when that player lands on a blind taste test space 8 prior to performing the blind taste test.
- [29] Prior to performing the blind taste test, the player may consult his or her notes pertaining to the wine samples recorded on that player's note sheet 16. However, the player must put the notes away before evaluating the wine. After tasting the wine,

they must answer the question(s) contained on the blind taste test space 8. The blind taste test space 8 may contain one or more questions. For example, the blind taste test space 8 may contain questions asking the player to identify name of the wine, the year on the bottle and/or the region or country where the wine is from, or the like. If the player answers none of the questions correctly, that player does not get to advance his or her game piece and that player's turn ends. However, if the player answers one or more questions correctly, the player may advance the number of spaces equal to the number of questions answered correctly. For example, if the blind taste test space 8 contains two questions and the player answers only one question correctly, the player can only advance one space. Further, if the blind taste test space 8 contains three questions and the player answers three correctly, then the player can advance three spaces. In an exemplary embodiment of the invention, players may be allowed to answer questions regarding the wine's name and wait to hear if this response is correct before attempting to guess the other important information about the wine (i.e., the year and region). This allows the player to change his or her opinion of which wine that player is tasting in the midst of a blind taste test to maximize his or her chances to advance. By allowing this process of elimination to occur, the game allows wine novices to compete with persons more knowledgeable in wine evaluation. Thus, a player can have no idea about which wine they tasted but still get to move forward at least one additional space by remembering the key elements of each of the three wines.

[30] The perceived taste of a wine is inherently dynamic. As a result, the taste of the respective wines will change throughout the game in subtle ways. Something as simple as the tasting order can change the way a wine tastes. The first wine tasted during the game may taste different to the players since they had subsequently tasted two other wines, each with their own flavors and qualities. Further, many other external factors can change the flavor of the wines during the course of the game, including allowing the wine to breathe, the temperature of the wine, the food or beverages taken in during the game. This makes the blind taste tests a very dynamic and challenging portion of the game.

[31] An additional way that the present invention allows players of all levels and experience to play is with the Bonus/Challenge cards. In an exemplary embodiment,

each player or team is provided with three Bonus/Challenge cards to start the game. These cards allow the players to attempt to move around the board more quickly by gambling for double moves. These dual purpose cards allow a player to select how and when they want to use them during the course of the game. The player may choose to use each of the Bonus/Challenge cards as a Bonus card or as a Challenge card depending on their confidence in their response to a trivia question. After a question is read to a player, that player can decide to use one of these cards. By way of example, the Bonus/Challenge card should be used as a Bonus card if the player thinks they know the answer to question. If the player gets the answer correct, that player gets to move ahead two spaces instead of the usual one space for the correct answer. If the player does not answer correctly, then every other player gets to move up two spaces while the player that used the Bonus card remains on the same space. The player should use a Bonus/Challenge card as a Challenge card if that player does not think he or she knows the answer to a trivia question. The player using the Challenge card can then force any other player to answer the question. If the challenged player gets the answer right, the challenged player gets to move ahead two spaces. If the challenged player gets it wrong, then the player who used the Challenge card gets to move ahead two spaces. A challenged player may not challenge another player to answer the question. They must answer the question. Of course, the challenged player may use one of his or her own Bonus/Challenge cards as a Bonus card. In doing so, if the challenged player answers the question correctly, the challenged player moves ahead four spaces as a result (two spaces for responding to the challenge and two spaces for using the Bonus card). All other players would stay where they were at the start of that turn. If the challenged player gets the answer wrong in this instance, the challenged player would not advance on the game board. The player that used the Challenge card gets to move ahead four spaces (two spaces as a result of the challenge and two spaces for the bonus). In addition, the other players would move ahead two spaces.

- [32] In any turn that one of the Bonus/Challenge cards is used, at least one player, and maybe more, will be moving ahead at least two spaces. Of course, if any player moving forward following a Bonus/Challenge card lands on a blind taste test space 8, that player gets to take the taste test at that time. This may result in multiple players landing on blind taste test spaces 8. If this occurs, each such player should take their

taste test separately. If any blind taste test spaces are skipped over as a result of a using a Bonus/Challenge card, then the space is skipped for that player and they do not get an opportunity to take that blind taste test.

- [33] Following a double move from the use of a Bonus/Challenge card, the play of the game continues normally with the next player taking his or her turn. This may mean that a player moving ahead as many as seven spaces in one turn may then take his or her regularly scheduled turn. For example, if a player gets challenged, then uses one of his or her cards as a Bonus card and gets the answer correct, that player would move ahead four spaces. If at the end of the four-space move, the player lands on a blind taste test space 8 and correctly identifies all three elements of the wine, that player would move ahead three more spaces. Then, if the player's turn was naturally coming up next, that player would get to take her or her turn as normal. Answering a question and moving forward as a result of a challenge does not count as the challenged player's turn.
- [34] The first player to make his or her way to the final space 10 wins the game. In the preferred embodiment, immediately before the final space 10 is a final blind taste test space 8. This space may differ from the previous blind taste test spaces 8 on the board. For example, on the final blind taste test space 8, the players must answer all the questions on that final blind taste test space 8 in order to advance to the final space 10. For example, if that final blind taste test space 8 contains three questions, then the player must answer all three questions. The player must continue to take the blind taste test until all of the questions are answered before advancing to the final space 10 and winning the game. As shown in Figure 4B, in the preferred embodiment, the game space 4 immediately preceding the final space 10 is a blind taste test space 8, which contains one question pertaining to the wine that the player is taste testing. Thus, the player only has to answer the one question regarding that wine correctly in order to advance to the final space 10. Once a player or team crosses into the final space 10, that player or team wins. The game can end or can be played until all other players or teams reach the final space 10.
- [35] In the foregoing specification, the present invention has been described with reference to specific exemplary embodiments thereof. It will be apparent to those skilled in the art, that a person understanding this invention may conceive of changes or other

embodiments or variations, which utilize the principles of this invention without departing from the broader spirit and scope of the invention. The specification and drawings are, therefore, to be regarded in an illustrative rather than restrictive sense.